Commission have decided not to extend the Border Area Development Programme to Tibet/China border.

Offer of unconditional talks with the ultras in different states

2561. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether ultras of J&K have responded to P.M.'s recent offer of talks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether offer of "unconditional talks" is also being extended to the ultras of other States of the Union;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any negotiations have been held; and

(f) if so, the details results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S. R BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) and (b) During his visit to J&K on 26-27 July, 1997, the Prime Minister had made an appeal to the misguided youth of the State who have joined the militant rnaks to give up their guns and said that the Government was prepared to have unconditional talks with them, to enable them to rejoin the mainsstream. So far there have been no response from the said misguided youth.

(c) and (d) During his visit to the North Eastern States in May, 1997, the Prime Minister had reiterated Government's willingness to hold unconditional talks with underground elements.

(e) and (f) The Issac-Mouivah group of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland has responded to the offer and after preliminary talks with them, it has been agreed to cease fire for 3 months w.e.f. 1st August 1997 and embark upon political level discussions. Government are also in touch with other insurgent Naga groups which have also committed to suspend their activities.

Amarnath Yatra under BSF Escort

2562. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether death of one pilgrim and injury to eighteen Amarnath pilgrims in an explosion in a hotel at Banihal on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway has been reported in the recent past despite taking very fool-poof security steps;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any ex-gratia payment has since been paid to the families of those killed and injured;

(d) whether Government propose to organise such pilgrim visits in future under the escort of Border Security Force; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONI-

(a) to (c) No Sir, it is not a fact that pilgrims of Amarnath Yatra were injured due to the explosion. On 23.7.97, an IED blast took place in Hotel Kailash, Banihal in which 15 persons sustaned injuries including the owner of the hotel, who later succumbed to his injuries. Out of the injured, two were police person-